

# Honors Advising Syllabus

## Advising at City College

### Preamble:

The City College academic advisers believe that our students should become proud members of the college community while they achieve their academic and career goals and become citizens of the world.

## Mission Statement:

The City College academic advisers support student growth and development by enabling students to identify their academic interests and abilities. They empower students to think critically about their roles and responsibilities as students through collaborative advising practices. Academic advising programs at the City College work with one-another, with departments and offices across the institution to promote integrated student learning, development and success.

**T**his document is meant to guide you through your career here at City College. Much like a syllabus for a college class guides you through the course, telling you what the aims of the class are, what you can expect to learn from it, and, most importantly, what is expected of you, this document is meant to help you navigate your undergraduate career. Just like a syllabus is no substitute for the professor, this is not meant to be a substitute for your advisor. This document offers guidelines, a timeframe and milestones, but your relationship with your advisor is personal and should be used to help you grow to your fullest ability throughout your college career. In other words, this document does not replace the relationship that you develop with your advisor.

In the Honors Center, both Macaulay and Honors Program students can expect to meet with their advisor a *minimum* of twice a year, though in order to get the most from the advising experience, you should make an effort to get to know your advisor. In addition to individual meetings, we hold mandatory class meetings each semester to guide students through their undergraduate career. As you develop as a student, our aim in the meetings is to bring the conversation beyond mere course guidance to your overall educational and co-educational growth. While we are by no means experts in every area of co-curricular or subject education, we can suggest and help guide you to the resources that will help you to get **where you're going**.

### Your Advisor will:

- Treat you with respect and take your concerns seriously.
- Clarify academic and honors requirements and guide you through your core classes and the beginning of your major.
- Help you if you struggle academically.
- Help to guide you to a major and career that are a good fit for you.
- Help you to develop your skills as a student.
- Help guide you to co-curricular activities that are a good fit for you.
- Help you solve problems and to listen to you.

- Keep your conversations confidential if you wish

What your Advisor can expect from you:

Understand that your advisor is not here to do everything for you; this is *your* education and, ultimately, you are responsible for it. Take ownership of your college experience. We are here to help you become a responsible adult and it is your responsibility to act accordingly.

You are expected to:

- Treat your advisor with respect and to understand that s/he has many students for whom s/he is responsible.
- Meet regularly with your advisor and to make appointments when appropriate.
- Search for answers yourself before coming to your advisor.
- Be polite and communicative with your advisor.
- *Read your CCNY emails every day!*
  - All of you will get a CCNY email account. This is the official way the Honors Center, your advisor, and the University will communicate with you during your college career. We expect you to read this email **daily**. Your CCNY email is the way the college gets in touch with you about announcements that may have an impact on your registration, bill payment, financial aid, scheduling, etc. Please keep in mind that many offices such as the Bursar, Registrar and Admissions **only** accept email messages from your CCNY email address.
- Attend **class meetings** and other relevant Honors Center workshops and activities.
- Seek support and assistance before a problem becomes a PROBLEM.

## Before You Get to City College:

Between May 1<sup>st</sup> and early June, you will have a lot of things to take care of. After you have confirmed your intention to enroll at CCNY and Honors, you will need to pay your commitment deposit. Make sure that City College is your school on your FAFSA and TAP Application.

Honors will send you a form through your MyCity page and you will be asked to inform us of your **AP/College Credits** and to indicate (again) your intended major so that we schedule you properly for your first semester. Don't worry if you don't know what you want to major in; most people change their minds anyway – your advisors are here to help you with that decision. Remember, those credits must be *officially* sent to the Office of Admissions in order for you to get credit for them.

You will have a list of items to be completed on your *MyCity* page (immunization forms, math placement testing, etc.) Make sure that you are on top of that or we will not be able to schedule you for classes and you will not be able to register.

Late in the summer, you will be contacted by a **Student Mentor** from Honors. They are here to help you navigate your first year and to offer guidance. Definitely use their knowledge and help!

**If you are getting a scholarship** (this is **not** the same as the *Macaulay Tuition Waiver*) then you will need to write a donor 'thank you' letter at the beginning of *every* semester while you are here and receiving that scholarship. If you do not write your letter, you will not get the scholarship.

**Paying Your Bill** is your responsibility. If you are in Macaulay, you may owe fees. If you are in the Honors Program, you will need to pay the difference between your scholarship and any financial aid you receive, and your total bill.

*As an incoming freshman you must attend a series of events:*

## June

**Registration Day** (run by Honors and New Student Experience): During this day you will learn important things about the structure of the college, your responsibilities as a student, the structure of the curriculum and, most exciting; you will receive a schedule of classes for which you can register. Anytime between when you register and a week before your Orientation (see below), you should come in to take your **ID picture**. When you do that, you will be able to collect your ID at Orientation.

Make sure to claim and activate your *citymail* email account. ALL official communication between the college and you will happen on this account. You are responsible for monitoring that account!!!

## Sometime in Summer

**City College Orientation Day** for Honors Students (run by Student Life)

## August

**Welcome Event** for Honors Students (run by the Honors Mentors and Honors Student Activities Club) one or two days before classes begin

**Macaulay 3-Day Orientation** for Macaulay Honors Students (run by Macaulay Central)

## Freshman Year

### First Semester:

All new students are required to take **New Student Seminar** (NSS), which is designed to help you think about what college is for, to learn about important resources and to build a relationship with the advisors in Honors as well as your fellow students.

Honors arranges **Tea with Advisors**, which serves two purposes: it gives us a chance to get to know each other, and it gives us an opportunity to share with you some topics that we think are important for you to know. You may sign up for as many as you want, and feel free to suggest Tea topics.

- Be aware of dates and deadlines. Use the **academic calendar** to know when important dates, like the withdrawal deadline, are. Incorporate these dates (including days like when Mondays are following Friday's schedule, for example) into your **personal calendar**.
- Make sure to use your course *syllabi* to shape your personal calendar. Incorporate your tests and papers into the calendar to make sure you stay on top of your work.
- You will have a **pre-registration advising appointment** with your advisor every semester. For your pre-registration advising appointment, you should be prepared to speak in some detail about how your classes are going. Are there struggles or successes? What is interesting? What are you learning about yourself? Do you need to seek outside help with some coursework? Additionally, you will be expected to have

looked at the *Undergraduate Bulletin* (available on the Registrar's web page) and class schedule to determine what courses you need for the next semester and what your schedule will be. We give 'permission' on CUNYFirst for all Honors classes on a first-come, first-served basis, and that happens through your advisor. You will have a block on your account that says that you cannot register without seeing an advisor, so make sure to pay attention to emails and sign up for an early appointment. For any other courses that require special permission to register, you need to obtain permission from the department offering the course, not from your Honors advisor.

- Developing a **schedule grid** makes sense – especially if you want to double major or do things that add to your overall coursework. Sketch out a curriculum grid for yourself for your 8 (or 10 for Architecture students) semesters here. Think about pre-requisites and co-requisites: you need to make sure that you are prepared to take the courses you need in order to get to the ones you want.
- Start to think about how you want to develop your **résumé**. What are the clubs you wish to join? Are there internships you want to start thinking about? You don't need to have all the answers, but it helps to start thinking about the questions and experiences that you'd like to have.
  - Do visit the **Career & Professional Development Institute** early in your college career. They can help you develop your resume and find you appropriate internships and volunteer opportunities along the way. The office offers a variety of workshops such as resume and cover letter writing, specific career exploration discussions, mock interviews and many more.
- Make sure the AP scores you wish to use towards your undergraduate degree, as well as any college level courses you took prior to CCNY, have transferred and are showing on your City College transcript.

### Second Semester:

- Now that you've gotten a bit used to being here, familiarize yourself with the tools at your disposal for organizing your education. Look at **Degree Works** on the CUNY website – but remember to always check with your advisors to make sure the information is accurate. Check out the **curriculum grids** on any of your intended majors.
- Revisit your initial goals. Does the plan that you've chosen still make sense for you? Set up a separate advising appointment to investigate this further; it's not a good idea to plan for a long conversation in the pre-registration period.
- Think about activities that will test whether your plan will be fitting for you in the long run. What kind of internships or research will help you discover more about your future goals?
- If you are interested in national scholarships and fellowships, you should think about attending a **How to be a Contender** workshop. Make a list of opportunities that might be helpful to you and think about the kind of experiences you will need to both help you decide if these scholarships and fellowships are right for you and if this is the right path for you. This may take a long time – semesters or years – but you can begin now.
- In the second semester of your freshman year, we continue the **Tea with Advisors**, and we add your first **Class Meeting**. We have class meetings every semester for the rest of your career here, so that we can keep in touch and dig more deeply into where you should be in your academic and co-curricular process.

## Sophomore Year

### Third Semester:

- There's business to take care of during your sophomore year, so you should be prepared:
  - Your major needs to be declared *before* you earn 60 credits. For most sophomores this comes at the end of the sophomore year but if you came in with a lot of AP credits that may happen in the first semester. This is especially important if you receive **TAP**.
  - Know your General Education requirements (Pathways, language, math, sciences.) How many credits do you need to complete your degree? Plan now for a smooth ride toward graduation! *This is your responsibility!*
  - Are you still undecided about your major? Time for some interviewing. Speak to your professors, speak to upper-classmen about their majors (does it sound interesting to you to study that?), go to the **Career Center** to test your interests, values, and skills. What can you learn about yourself from that?
- If you are thinking of applying for opportunities at CCNY, or elsewhere, you may want to attend the *Personal Statement Writing Workshop* this semester.

### Fourth Semester

- **Know your major academic requirements!**
  - Make a plan for all the courses you *want* to take. Are there pre-requisites for those?
  - YOU MUST DECLARE YOUR MAJOR BY 60 Credits!
- **Begin to immerse yourself in your major by**
  - Getting to know the advisors & administrators in your major.
  - Getting to know the faculty in your major.
  - Finding a faculty mentor.
  - Finding out *now* what will be involved in doing honors in your major.
  - Making sure you are on the department's list serve.
  - Attending lectures and events on campus.
  - Exploring volunteer experiences related to your major.
  - Becoming involved in student academic organizations.
  - Exploring professional organizations in your field.
- **Make yourself a strong candidate for outside opportunities**
  - **Build a better resume by**
    - Taking a leadership role in a student organization.
    - Helping to organize a big event.
  - Study abroad whenever you get the chance. There are outside scholarships available to help you: Gilman, NSEP Boren, Chancellor's Global Scholarship, DAAD, Freeman-ASIA, Global E3, and many others. Visit the CUNY Study Abroad website and CCNY Study Abroad office.
  - Volunteer at an organization or company you like (during the summer, winter or during the semester).
  - Intern in a field that you want to explore (during the summer).
- **Challenge Yourself!**

- Apply for programs at CCNY like **Colin Powell, Skadden Arps, and C-SURP** (and many more!) Many of these applications are due in the early spring of your sophomore year.
- Apply for outside opportunities (scholarships, fellowships, internships, research, etc.) that look interesting – it's great practice and hey, you never know!
- The applications for many of the most prestigious fellowships are due in the fall of your junior year, so you should start working on those in the late spring and over the summer.
- **Secure your faculty connections**
  - Get to know (*really know*) as many faculty as possible, including TAs.
  - Visit them during office hours.
  - Keep in touch and check in. Get their contact information.
  - Ask them for recommendations.
  - Make sure that they have what they need from you in order to write you a meaningful letter of recommendation.
  - You should aim to have 4 or 5 meaningful faculty connections by the time you reach the beginning of your senior year.

## Junior Year

### Fifth Semester

- **Majors, Minors and other Curricular Issues**
  - By now your major should have been declared. This is a good time to re-check and make sure that you are on track to graduate on time. Are there classes you want or need to take before you are graduated? Revisit your plan.
  - Make sure to declare your minor(s). Undeclared minors can interfere with your TAP eligibility.
  - Revisit your core requirements. Make sure you know when you will take any remaining core classes.
  - If you are doing an honors thesis or honors in your major, it may begin in the spring semester of your junior year. Make sure that you are ready for that.
  - Are you doing Pre-Med or Pre-Law? What requirements or suggested classes do you need to be prepared to take those exams?
- **Professional Schools (MD, JD)**
  - We seriously advise that you consider a gap year or two to prepare. Discuss a productive way to use this time with your advisors.
  - If you do not plan to take a gap year, then you will need to plan a study schedule. MCATs need to be taken before the end of this year if you want to start school as soon as you graduate.
  - Applications for Medical School should be in by June or July.
- **Special Programs**
  - This is your last chance for the Colin Powell Fellowship (1 year).
  - When do you need to apply for the program you are interested in? What will you need to be prepared?
  - We offer a Personal Statement Writing Workshop every semester. If you have not yet attended, you should plan to do so this semester. It is a two-part workshop; please put both dates into your planner.

- **What condition is your résumé in?**
  - Now is the time to make sure that you are ready to grab internship opportunities and be ready to get noticed at the Career Fairs.
  - Make sure you are registered with, and go to, the Career and Professional Development Institute.
  - Note the dates of the recruitment fairs.
  - Be prepared to apply for internships & REUs (Research Experience for Undergraduates – information available on the National Science Foundation website.)
  - Do you have several faculty members who are ready to write letters of recommendation for you?
  - Have you been involved in extracurricular activities? Have you held leadership positions?
- **National Scholarships/Fellowships**
  - There are many prestigious scholarships that you might want to apply for in your junior year. Find out more about the Harry S. Truman Scholarship for Public Service, Goldwater Scholarship for STEM research, Morris K. Udall Scholarship for students who plan careers focused on the environment, Public Policy Junior Summer Institutes for students planning careers in public service. Students must discuss these fellowships long before the deadlines with the National Scholarships Coordinator.
  - Keep your eyes peeled for Scholarship Information Sessions throughout the year.
- **Planning for the future**
  - Start to decide whether you want to go to work or graduate school or something else
  - What do you need to be prepared? (see grad school time line)

### Sixth Semester

- **Make sure you are on track to graduate on time!**
  - Do a preliminary 'graduation check' with your honors and major advisor so that if you are missing anything, you can plan to take it in your senior year.
  - Does your major require a senior project? Make sure you know what you'll be doing.
  - Do you have other requirements such as community service, study abroad or an internship? Make sure that this is done or that you know how you are going to get it done.
- **Summer of Junior Year:** This is your final summer between your college years. Make it count!
  - Pay attention to deadlines for study abroad programs, REUs, internships, and work or volunteer programs.
- **Planning for Post Graduate Education**
  - Med School Applications are due in June (they have rolling admissions, but you'd better not wait) if you want to go right after graduation.
  - Most Law and Grad school applications will be due in the fall so you should start your research on which schools are a good fit for you.

- Spend this semester and the summer doing very serious research about which programs are right for you. If you haven't already done so, attend the personal statement writing workshop this semester.
- Fellowships to support graduate education are due in the fall. If you are planning to apply, you need to be working on these over the summer.

## Senior Year

### Seventh Semester

- **Reviewing what you need to graduate and taking the next steps**
  - By now you should know where you stand in your major and with your core.
  - Hopefully you will have time to take 'fun' courses in your senior year.
  - Make sure that any INCs or FINs are corrected before you file for graduation (November deadline for February graduation, March deadline for May graduation – check the academic calendar).
  - Make sure that any study abroad or e-permit grades are posted on your City College transcript.
- **If you are planning to go to graduate school right away**
  - You should be finishing up your personal statements and studying for the appropriate exams now.
  - You should have your recommendations lined up.
  - If you are applying for fellowships to support yourself in graduate school, the applications are due at various points during this semester. Keep aware of deadlines and work thoughtfully with the National Scholarships Coordinator.

### Eighth Semester

- **Almost There...**
  - If you are in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences or Education, then you will get your core graduation check from your Honors advisor and bring it to your Division so they can finish your graduation check and pass it on to your Department. This will all then go to the Registrar so that they can certify that you are ready to graduate. Make sure all your minors are declared and completed as well.
  - *Make sure you apply to graduate on CUNYFirst by the deadline.* Your advisor can see if your application went through if you're worried.
  - If you have a 3.9 or better, with no incompletes or withdrawals, you will be contacted with the opportunity to apply to be the Valedictorian.
  - Latin Honors (Just FYI):
    - 3.8+ Summa Cum Laude
    - 3.5 – 3.79 Magna Cum Laude
    - 3.2 – 3.49 Cum Laude

### Post-graduate

- Stay in touch with your major.
- Stay in touch with any programs from which you benefitted.
- Stay in touch with your peers.
- Connect with the Alumni Association.



- You can still use many resources here at the college so know which ones they are and how to access them.
- Be a graduate mentor to an undergraduate.
- Stay in touch with the **Honors Center** and **Young Alumni Honors Group**.

**CONGRATULATIONS!!!**